



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

September 30, 1997

**H.R. 1703
Department of Veterans Affairs Employment Discrimination
Resolution and Adjudication Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
on September 30, 1997*

H.R. 1703 would restructure authority and responsibility for overseeing equal employment opportunities within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). CBO estimates that the costs of implementing this legislation would have an insignificant budgetary impact. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments. Because it would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 1703 would create the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication within VA to adjudicate complaints by employees of VA of employment discrimination. The bill would also reallocate responsibilities within VA so that more employees would have duties related only to matters of employment discrimination, and it would require that such employees be outside of the control of the director of the facility where they work. In addition, the bill would establish a panel to provide an independent assessment of the agency's practices and procedures in relation to equal employment opportunity and sexual harassment and to make recommendations for their improvement. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$400,000 for the costs of the panel.

VA is currently revising its system for processing and adjudicating claims of employment discrimination, and CBO expects that many changes required by the bill would probably occur under current law. Other changes in procedures would not add significant costs.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Valerie Barton. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.